

HOUSE No. 3340

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Benjamin Swan

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act to establish a democracy fund.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Benjamin Swan

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

11th Hampden

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION

SEE HOUSE, NO. 3646 OF 2007-2008.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A DEMOCRACY FUND.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 9 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:—

2 Section 31. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be
3 known as the Democracy Fund. There shall be credited to said fund revenues received from the sale of Democracy
4 in Action distinctive registration plates and a state supplemental allocation in such amount that the yearly revenues
5 reaches, but does not exceed \$1,000,000; interest earnings thereon issued pursuant to subsection (d) of section 2E of
6 chapter 90.

7 (b) The secretary of state shall be the trustee of all amounts credited to the Democracy Fund, Amounts
8 credited to the Commonwealth Security Trust Fund and interest earnings thereon shall be available for expenditure
9 and not subject to appropriation at the direction of the secretary of state for the following purposes: (i) for providing
10 grants to local community-based organizations engaged in voter registration and/or civic education efforts; (ii) for
11 providing grants to non-partisan statewide organizations that sponsor or undertake voter education, voter outreach
12 and/or voter registration efforts; and (iii) for grants to public schools to develop and implement civic education
13 and/or civic engagement programs targeted to students of said public schools.

14 SECTION 2. E of chapter 90 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Official Edition, is hereby
15 amended by adding the following subsection:—

16 (d) The registrar shall furnish, upon application, to the owners of private passenger motor vehicles distinctive
17 registration plates which shall display on their face a design celebrating democracy and civic engagement. Said
18 design shall be by the registrar in consultation with the secretary of state. There shall be a fee of not less than \$40
19 for such plates in addition to the established registration fee for private passenger motor vehicles, such fee being
20 payable at the time of registration of such vehicle and at each renewal thereof. The portion of the total fee
21 remaining after the deduction of the costs directly attributable to the issuance of such plates shall be deposited in a
22 registry retained revenue account and of the remaining portion of such fee, 100 per cent shall be deposited in the
23 Democracy and Civic Engagement Fund Established in section 31 of chapter 9.